

Hamateur Chatter

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One of the World's Oldest Continuously Active Radio Amateur Clubs – since 1917

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SPECIAL FIELD DAY EDITION

As our President noted in the early edition of the Chatter this month, the bit of warm weather may have you starting to think about warmer weather activities.

This special edition of the Chatter is a start of the public planning for the MRAC Field Day effort.

We will again operate from the very comfortable confines of train depot at Pioneer Village. If you haven't attended a FD at the train depot, it is worth trip just to get a free look at the depot.

Mark your calendars for June 27th and 28th.

Last year the phone ops and the digital mode ops got a bit competitive. The use of computer logging allowed everyone to watch their "competition's" scores and make sure they operated long enough to put their mode in the lead.

The MRAC FD operation is low key, so once in the lead, there was time to walk around, get some eyeball QSOs on the log sheet and have something to eat and drink before going back to reclaiming the lead.

We hope to promote some friendly competition again this year!

Speaking of this year, we will do a few things different. We should have all the same features those that come to FD regularly expect, but we hope to have members bring out any gear they would like to share with the group, show off or test out in real FD conditions.

Have a battery operated station? Bring it out. Been working on a new mode in your shack and want to try it out in the field? We'd like to see it. Have a portable antenna idea that needs testing? We'd like to see it get tested.

The point here is we want to get members involved and have them share their ideas and experience with the rest of the group. I personally have learned more at FD from other participants than from almost any other operating activity. Come to think of it, it may just be flat out number one.

We would like those with experience to make an impression on the rest of us. This may mean a new ham of a year or two might show the veterans of the hobby something they never saw before. It might mean one of our

decades old members will 'educate' some of us kids. It's all part of the fun. Have a goal for operating? We will accommodate. I already have one operator that wants to work CW (listen up you phone guys). He has a station and will work both days for quite a few hours. If you want to work a station of your own, go ahead and bring it. Contact me ahead of time and we'll plan times and antennas for your use. Knowing who wants to work what mode or radio in advance will let us accommodate. I would be pleased if we found we were short on radios or antennas for everyone wanting to operate their favorite mode or equipment.

Of course the die-hards show up on Saturday and leave on Sunday and never leave the grounds in between. That's great and a good part of the FD fun. However, do you want to work a couple of hours and get back to real life? No problem. Want to work a full day? No problem. Let us know when you can come out and the plan will accommodate.

At present, the plan for the actual day will be the same as in the past. Those that can assist with setup will arrive at Pioneer Village at 8 AM and begin the business of getting down to business. About noon the Club Picnic Committee should have some eats available and at 1:00 PM we start operating.

We operate on Sunday until well past noon. Those that are squeezing out the last few points can run to 1 PM. Others will be taking down and preparing to go home a bit before then. The whole effort is usually wrapped by 3 PM.

It seems like June is a long ways away (and the new snow makes it feel that way), but the planning and preparations must be done starting now.

So let me know what YOU want to see at FD. Let me know when YOU want to operate. Let me know what YOU want to operate. This is a club effort and the members should get to do what THEY want to do.

Remember this is a good time to bring that friend or family member that might have a bit of the ham radio bug in them. We can put them at a radio and guide them into making contacts. Who knows where it might lead?

We'll publish more info on FD as more information is available and we receive requests for stations/modes/times/etc. Remember, just over 4 months to FD. Mark the dates on your calendar now!

Anyone wanting in on the fun before FD, we are always looking for help with the preparations. Contact us via the MRAC Yahoo Group or email me at ab9cd@arrl.net.

Until next time,
The FD Committee